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Report to STAKEHOLDERS

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At Edwards,
EIAP
can be
a Snap!



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Wild reptiles can be expensive pets. Learn what to do when you have a wild reptile, and find out which reptiles are protected by law.

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Dean Baker jumped at the opportunity to become a Restoration Advisory Board representative for the Main Base Test Wing as soon as there was a vacancy. Read why inside.

No one can relax in meeting environmental requirements. That's why environmental experts at Edwards Air Force Base always stand ready to help accomplish the mission.

Admittedly, the phrase "environmental impact analysis process," or EIAP, can strike fear in the hearts of even the most fearless government project planner. For some, EIAP raises fears of uncontrollable delays and a nightmare tangle of regulations and compliance requirements.

Today, those who work in Environmental Management (EM) at Edwards Air Force Base (AFB) hope their efforts to streamline the process and provide expert assistance with minimizing impacts have eliminated such concerns.

Instead of months, the process can now take minutes or only a few days to complete. Rather than reams of paperwork to fill out, the most commonly used EIAP forms can be found online.

"It's not a scary or mysterious process, which may have been the perception at some time in the past. But that's not the reality today," said Michelle Bare, a JT3/CH2M HILL employee who coordinates the process at EM. "Sometimes EM can sign off right away and send back documentation of the analysis the same

day. It depends on how complex the project is. Usually EIAP can be completed in 15 to 20 days."

EIAP is a planning tool that ensures environmental requirements are addressed early in development of programs, projects and activities. At Edwards, an average of about 120 EIAP-related applications are processed each month.

The process integrates environmental considerations in the decision-making process. But more, it fulfills the law.

EIAP is the first step in environmental review at Edwards. Bottom line, all requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and Air Force EIAP guidance must be met.

"One misconception is that those responsible for environmental review have the authority to approve or disapprove a project," said Keith Dyas, an environmental engineer at EM with responsibility for EIAP. "That's not true. The Environmental Impact Analysis Process never halts a project. It simply assists in de-

See *EIAP*, page 7

Q. I have noticed that the Environmental Restoration Program's Operable Unit 5 and Operable Unit 10 are now known as Operable Unit 5/10. Why is this?

A. In May 2005, Environmental Restoration Program managers and federal and state Remedial Project Managers met to discuss and come to an agreement to combine Operable Unit (OU) 5 and OU10 to be named North Base OU5/10.

OU5 used to be known as *occupied* North Base, which included the former Jet Propulsion Laboratory complex. OU10 was known simply as *unoccupied* North Base area.

The Air Force presented a proposal to fold OU10 into OU5 to form one operable unit, thereby eliminating one set of Feasibility Study, Proposed Plan and Record of Decision documents.

"Shifting over to a single OU was primarily a cost savings measure," said Kathryn Curtis, a program manager for the Environmental Restoration Program at Edwards Air Force Base (AFB). "The two were combined to allow for completion of a single set of documents. The number of sites in each OU did not justify a separate set of documents for each OU."

Because of Edwards AFB's size, the Air Force broke the base into smaller operable units for cleanup purposes. Each unit was drawn based upon the type of potential contamination present or by geographic area.

The cost has decreased for both OUs because of the change over to a single OU. "The designation of OU5/10 was retained to keep the links to older documents that may have been produced for either OU," Curtis explained. "Much of the data is stored in documents that are either for OU5 or OU10. More recent documents reflect the OU5/10 name."

RTS



If you have a question about the Edwards Air Force Base Environmental Management program, you may address it to Stakeholders Forum, Attn: Gary Hatch or Miriam Horning, 5 E. Popson Ave., Edwards AFB, CA 93524-8060, or send e-mail to:

95abw.pae@edwards.af.mil

Next RAB Meeting

Nov. 16, 2006

5:30 p.m.

Lancaster

Essex House

44916 10th Street West

The public is invited.

Report to Stakeholders is a publication of the Edwards AFB Environmental Management Division. Its purpose is to inform and educate the public, base workers and residents about continuing Environmental Management efforts at Edwards AFB. It currently has a circulation of 6,000, including about 2,000 subscribers.

Contents of the *Report to Stakeholders* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force.



Commander 95th Air Base Wing..... Col. H. Brent Baker, Sr.
Base Civil Engineer..... James Judkins
Division Chief, Environmental Management..... Robert Wood
Branch Chief, Environmental Restoration..... Ai Duong
Branch Chief, Environmental Conservation..... Gerald Callahan
Branch Chief, Environmental Quality..... Robert Shirley

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**Report to
STAKEHOLDERS**



Wild Reptiles can be expensive pets

For generations, children have been surprising their parents with exciting bits of nature they have brought home. A day in the neighboring woods or desert scrub could produce treasures such as unusually colored stones, feathers, bleached animal bones or even a pet lizard.

Bringing home these little representatives of nature has often been tolerated or even encouraged as a part of growing up, expanding the child's own exploration and learning experiences, and encouraging an interest in the natural world.

The interest does seem to carry over into adulthood for many people, but in the case of reptiles it is best to leave them in the outdoor classroom where they were found.

In California, most people have at least seen pictures of our state reptile, the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), and are aware that there are federal and state laws protecting the species. However, there are still a few people who seem to lack a complete understanding of the law.

The desert tortoise can be fascinating, and watching one can be enjoyable. Unlike many of our wild creatures, wild desert tortoises do not disappear as soon as you approach. They are easy to observe as they go about their daily lives. In fact, some of them are quite curious and may come right up to you. But even if approached by a tortoise, you should resist the urge to touch it or otherwise interfere with its natural behavior.

All tortoise sightings should be promptly reported to Environmental Management (EM) for their records. One way to differentiate between a captive tortoise and a wild tortoise is by a circular metal tag glued to the back of the shell of a captive tortoise. Whether or not there is tag, the animal should not be handled and the sighting should be reported to EM.

Tortoises are not the only reptiles on base that enjoy the protection of the law. Most people do not realize this, but every plant and animal found within Edwards Air Force Base's boundaries are federally managed.

Unaware of possible consequences, anyone who removes a reptile from base property may be punished by a fine and up to a year in jail.

Although most other reptiles are not as cooperative as desert tortoises, the best thing to do is to observe them from a safe



WILD THING — A desert tortoise takes a walk through the desert at Edwards Air Force Base (AFB). Desert tortoises are a protected species.

distance. If you do catch a snake or a lizard, let it go where you found it. It is best not to carry it somewhere else.

Off base, these same reptiles are also protected by state regulations. In California, catching many types of lizards or snakes requires a fishing license. If you are interested in keeping wild reptiles, visit the Web site:

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=fgc&group=01001-02000&file=2000&file=2000-2020>, or anywhere they sell fishing licenses and pick up the accompanying brochure. Inside you will find a list of lizard and reptile species along with the limits on how many can be captured, which is usually two.

Keeping wild reptiles is more complicated than it might seem. Like all wild animals, reptiles have trouble adjusting to captivity. They see humans as potential predators and confinement in the presence of people puts a great deal of stress on them. This stress can weaken the reptile's immune system and cause it to become sick easily or be overcome by parasites. Diet can be another major problem for reptiles brought into captivity from the wild. Most people are not going to be able to provide the same diet that wild reptiles would be eating if they were catching their own food. To name just

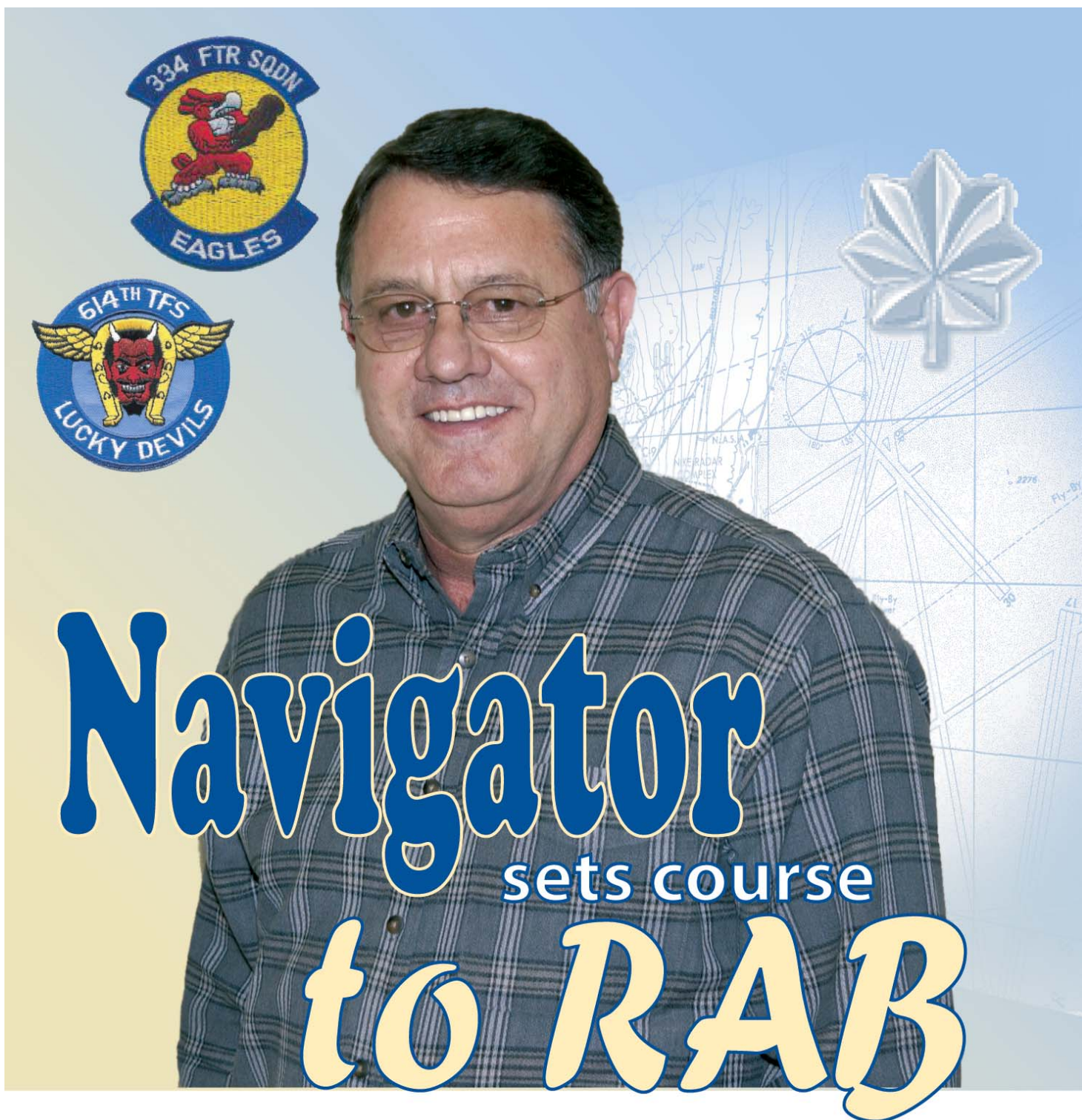


HANGIN' OUT — A leopard lizard basks in the sun. The best thing to do when one comes into contact with a wild reptile is to watch it from a distance.

a few that are difficult to duplicate, leopard lizards often eat other lizards and horned toads feed primarily on ants.

If you are interested in having a reptile for a pet, several captive varieties are available in pet stores. If you have a proper permit and are determined to take one from the wild, be sure to carefully research its diet and habitat first and try as much as possible to duplicate the diet.

— Written by EM Natural Resources



ON TIME, ON TARGET — *Dean Baker is the new Test Wing public representative to the Restoration Advisory Board. A retired lieutenant colonel, Baker works for the TYBRIN Corporation in the Electronic Warfare Assessment Division. His primary concern is to leave the environment better than he found it for his grandchildren and future generations.*

Dean Baker has logged enough hours in fighter aircraft to know what is in the best interest of Edwards Air Force Base's Test Wing community.

Baker brings much more than over 20 years of military experience to the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), a group that promotes two-way communication between the Air Force and the public concerning environmental cleanup on Edwards Air

Force Base (AFB).

Growing up on a farm in the Northwest, Baker developed a strong interest in the environment at a young age and pursued this interest in college by majoring in range and watershed science. A watershed is an area of land from which runoff (from rain, snow, or springs) drains to a body of water. He also holds a masters degree in business administration.

"I wanted to be a Conservation Officer with the State of Idaho, protecting our natural resources," Baker said. "Then I enrolled in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) at Utah State University and entered the Air Force straight out of college."

When he saw the vacant RAB position in the local newspaper, Baker wasted no time submitting his application.

"This position is a great opportunity for me to get more involved with the environment. The RAB allows me to hear firsthand of the work being done to clean up past contamination. As a member of the board, I can ask questions and pose concerns from Test Wing employees directly to the Air Force."

With two grandchildren in the family, Baker says everyone has an obligation to leave the environment better than they found it.

"We can do a lot individually just by paying attention to the little things – recycling, picking up litter off the sidewalk or keeping the car tuned up," Baker said. "It really does not take much. We can solve the bigger environmental issues if everyone plays a part."

Life as a military officer has taken Baker all over the world and has taught him the value of teamwork. His first assignment took him to Rapid City, S.D., working in a missile silo. Baker remembered the responsibility was intense, and procedures had to be memorized and followed precisely to ensure missiles were not launched unintentionally.

Pursuing a career in the air instead of underground was an easy choice for Baker. He joked that he already "had lots of childhood experience as a pilot of model airplanes." Being on a flight crew was similar to being part of a big family for Baker. There were normally 24 aircraft assigned to a squadron with a two-man crew per plane. The big group formed close bonds because of the training, flying and recreational time the airmen spent together. Active memberships in the Air Force Association and Retired Officers Association help Baker stay in contact with his former "flying buddies."

Baker has flown with several well-known squadrons, such as the 614th Fighter Squadron or "Lucky Devils," and the 334th Fighter Squadron – known as the "Eagles" – originally formed in 1942 from one of three Royal Air Force (RAF) Eagle Squadrons composed entirely of American pilots. One of Baker's most unique flying assignments was intercepting Russian bombers during the Cold War while stationed in Iceland.

Baker did not spend his entire military career with his head in the clouds. He put his tactical experience to good use outside of the cockpit. Traveling throughout Europe and the Pacific, Baker worked for the Air Force Inspector General determining if the Air Force was getting their money's worth on such things as flight simulators and training exercises. Findings were reported directly to the Pentagon.

Baker can relate to the Environmental Restoration Branch's efforts at coordinating 471 cleanup sites on Edwards AFB. He perfected his coordination skills while working in the Overseas Deploy-

ment Division at Headquarters Air Combat Command at Langley AFB, Va. Stateside fighter squadrons rotated to their overseas operating locations every few years. Baker's unit had to coordinate the timing, funding and tanker support to move the squadrons on schedule.

Baker's last stop in the military was Edwards AFB, where he worked at Flight Operations, taking care of contracts for people flying government planes. His primary function was to make sure that

the contractors flying the planes were fully qualified. Baker moved on to become the Deputy Director of Contracting, managing 135 people who oversaw the day-to-day contracting requirements of the base.

After retiring, Baker applied his experience to the private sector. He later returned to Edwards AFB to work for the TYBRIN Corporation, where he has been for the past four years. He currently works in the Electronic Warfare Assessment Division, a group that tests and analyzes the use

of electromagnetic energy to defend against threats or to initiate attacks on the enemy. Electronic warfare includes equipment such as radar, jammers, lasers, microwave energy and warning systems.

As the new public representative for the Test Wing, Baker wants his co-workers to know he is available as a spokesperson for their concerns or questions. "I know the cleanup program is doing well because people are not 'up in arms,'" Baker said. "But it's still a good practice to have conduits between the public and the Air Force for open communication. I'm glad to be a part of it."

Baker lives in Lancaster with his wife.

"This position is a great way for me to get more involved with the environment. The RAB allows me to hear firsthand of the work being done to clean up past contamination."

Dean Baker
Main Base Test Wing
Restoration Advisory Board



HARD AT WORK — Baker, right, listens to a presentation from one of the environmental program managers with fellow RAB members David Schory and Larry Hagenauer, left to right, at the May 2006 meeting in Mojave.

Environmental Program Managers keep Restoration Advisory Board ahead of the **LEARNING CURVE**



LET'S GET IT STARTED — Environmental Management Division Chief Robert Wood welcomes attendees to the day-long Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) training session held June 3 at the Base Conference Center.

Eighteen people arrived at the Edwards Air Force Base (AFB) Conference Center for a special training session held June 3 for Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) members.

"These training sessions are another way for the restoration program managers to communicate one on one with members of the public," said Robert Wood, chief of the Environmental Management Division. "The quarterly RAB meetings help us inform the public about current projects, but a training session allows all of us to look back and see how far we've progressed and moved forward in the direction we're headed."

"We paint an overall picture of the cleanup effort at Edwards, outline our goals and explain how we plan to get there."

The training covered a variety of topics for new and established public representatives, each representing different communities within and surrounding Edwards AFB. Topics included information about roles and responsibilities of RAB members, cleanup laws and regulations, stages of the cleanup process, technical impracticability waivers and containment zones, emergent contaminants, cleanup technologies, to risk assessments and natural resource injury.

Environmental Restoration Branch Chief Ai Duong said the agenda topics were subjects that every RAB member should know to gain a better understanding of the cleanup effort. "It's important for new members to become familiar with the basic terminology and procedures, but we want all of the members to be up to date with the current issues, such as emergent contaminants and technical impracticability. These are fairly new issues in the cleanup program that affect the way we run things," Duong added.

One topic not officially on the agenda was teambuilding, an essential part of the training session according to RAB Public Co-chair Ruby Messersmith. A barbecue luncheon helped break the ice as RAB members, contractors and program managers ate chicken, hamburgers and hot dogs. "You can tell that Environmental Restoration Program managers and their contractors take great pride in what they do, and what they do – they do extremely well," said David Schory, the Air Base Wing's public representative. "I am very proud to be associated with this group of professionals and in our ability to jointly help clean up Edwards Air Force Base and make it an even better, cleaner, and safer base for now and for the future!"

EIAP: Looks to minimize project impacts with streamlining and providing expert assistance

From page 1

signing a project that minimizes impact.”

Here’s how that works. The process ensures that the project complies with the NEPA and provides the proper documentation within NEPA. In the course of analysis, EIAP will identify federal, state and local laws that could halt a project. But if that happens, environmental specialists are available to work with the project’s manager to see that impacts are mitigated or avoided by, for instance, relocating some part of the project to an area where the environmental impact would not be a concern.

EIAP review typically is triggered by one of three Air Force forms — 813 (Request for EIAP), 332 (Work Request) and 5926 (Edwards AFB Civil Engineering Work Clearance Request). An Air Force form 813 is for projects needing an in-depth environmental analysis such as building a road, constructing a new building or starting a new program. Completing the 813 EIAP request does not always lead to

an Environmental Assessment (EA), it just starts a process of analysis to determine if there will be any significant environmental impacts from the work.

For minor projects, documentation can be completed that will not necessitate an EA in most, if not all, cases. Some routine activities like building maintenance, utility repair and equipment replacement can be handled with a CATEX, which is a categorical exclusion from further analysis under NEPA.

“Knowledge of environmental laws is required to determine if a project, program or activity is going to have a significant impact on the environment,” Dyas said. “EM provides the experts with knowledge of environmental regulations. They are able to define the level of impact and whether it will be significant under NEPA.”

When a project is less than significant, it can be handled with an EA or CATEX, which simply documents the findings of the environmental analysis or the exclusion from it. If, however, there is a finding of

significance, then an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), a much more costly and time-consuming analysis of environmental impacts and mitigation measures, must be undertaken.

According to Dyas, in the majority of cases, project managers should be able to complete the environmental review steps quickly and simply.

Sometimes EM can even surprise people with how fast the process can be. Usually this is true for proposed work that might already be covered by an existing EA.

“An existing EA could cover whatever the new work is, in which case, the sign-off can be handled very quickly,” Bare said.

The level of experience and expertise provided by EM should be of considerable advantage to project managers, never a hindrance. If something about EIAP isn’t a snap, the EIAP staff at EM is available to help.

RTS

“The Environmental Impact Analysis Process never halts a project. It simply assists in designing a project that minimizes impact.”

Keith Dyas
EIAP Project Manager
Environmental Management

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Published data and documents relating to the Environmental Restoration Program are available for public review in information repositories at four locations. The current information repositories are located in the cities of Boron, Lancaster and Rosamond, as well as Edwards AFB. They are updated when new documents are released.

If you have any questions about information in the repositories, please contact Gary Hatch, Environmental Public Affairs at (661) 277-1454 or through e-mail at 95abw.pae@edwards.af.mil.



Location	Days and Hours of Operation	
Edwards AFB Library 5 W. Yeager Blvd. Building 2665 Edwards AFB, Calif. (661) 275-2665	Mon-Thurs	9:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.
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Kern County Public Library Wanda Kirk Branch 3611 Rosamond Blvd. Rosamond, Calif. (661) 256-3236	Tue & Wed	Noon - 8 p.m.
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Los Angeles County Public Library 601 W. Lancaster Blvd. Lancaster, Calif. (661) 948-5029	Mon-Wed	10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
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